

4-1-99

FACT SHEET

DIRECT FINAL RULE AMENDING THE AIR TOXICS REGULATION FOR MAGNETIC TAPE MANUFACTURING OPERATIONS

TODAY'S ACTION

- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is today issuing a direct final rule amending the magnetic tape air toxics regulation. Air toxics are those pollutants known or suspected to cause cancer or other serious health effects.
- Today's action will expand a compliance option for facilities subject to the magnetic tape rulemaking, which will allow increased flexibility for this industry while not decreasing the environmental benefits of the rule.
- The compliance option in the current magnetic tape rule allows the owner or operator of an affected facility to commit to more stringent control of the coating operations in lieu of controlling certain solvent storage tanks. Today's action will expand this option by allowing owners or operators who commit to more stringent control of the coating operations to leave uncontrolled a limited number of pieces of mix preparation equipment combined with a limited number of solvent storage tanks.
- EPA originally developed this expanded compliance option as part of a regulatory reinvention pilot project under Project XL (for eXcellence and Leadership). EPA uses Project XL to test new approaches to environmental protection through pilot projects that exchange regulatory flexibility for enhanced and innovative environmental protection. Though the pilot project was not completed, today's amendment is an outgrowth of that initiative, and is expected to provide greater flexibility to the entire regulated industry while maintaining an equivalent level of air toxics reduction.
- If EPA receives no adverse or critical public comments within thirty days after publication of today's amendment, this action will become effective automatically sixty days after publication. In the unlikely event that EPA receives adverse or critical comments, EPA will withdraw this direct final rule, address those comments, and subsequently publish a final rule in the Federal Register.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS AMENDMENT?

- This amendment will increase regulatory flexibility by allowing an alternative control option for facilities subject to the air toxics rule for magnetic tape manufacturing. This

new compliance alternative may reduce the regulatory burden for facilities that choose it, while leaving unaffected all other facilities.

BACKGROUND

- Under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, EPA is required to regulate emissions of 188 listed toxic air pollutants. (Note that this list originally referenced 189 pollutants, but EPA has subsequently removed the chemical caprolactam from the list.) On July 16, 1992, EPA published a list of industrial source categories that emit one or more of these air toxics. For listed categories of "major" sources (those that emit 10 tons/year or more of a listed pollutant or 25 tons/year or more of a combination of pollutants), the Clean Air Act requires EPA to develop standards that require the application of stringent air pollution reduction measures known as maximum achievable control technology (MACT).
- EPA's published list of industry groups (known as "source categories") to be regulated includes major sources that manufacture magnetic tape. Types of products made by this industry include audio and video cassettes, and computer diskettes.
- The final rule for magnetic tape manufacturing operations was issued December 15, 1994. It established air emission control requirements for manufacturers of magnetic tape that are major sources for hazardous air pollutant emissions. The regulation requires affected facilities to reduce these emissions from most regulated equipment by 95%.
- EPA is issuing this amendment based on comments and data submitted by representatives of the magnetic tape manufacturing industry. Based on the comments and subsequent EPA analysis, EPA has concluded that this amendment will provide additional regulatory flexibility by providing an alternative control option for some magnetic tape manufacturing facilities without sacrificing air toxics emissions reductions.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

- Interested parties can download the rule from EPA's web site on the Internet under recent actions at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>. For further information about this amendment, contact Ms. Michele Aston of EPA's Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards at (919) 541-2363.
- The EPA's Office of Air and Radiation's (OAR's) homepage on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program and many other air pollution programs and issues. The OAR's home page address is: <http://www.epa.gov/oar/>.

